



County of Los Angeles
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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DAVID E. JANSSEN
Chief Administrative Officer

Board of Supervisors
GLORIA MOLINA
First District

YVONNE B. BURKE
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

January 21, 2005

To: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

Raymond G. Fortner, Jr.
County Counsel

CODE ENFORCEMENT PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS - STATUS REPORT

This Status Report provides your Board with an update of actions taken in response to Board actions and directions regarding improvement of the County's code enforcement processes. This Report provides information on the status of the following:

- Amendment to the County Code to establish administrative fines and non-compliance fees related to code violations;
- Establishment of the County Counsel Civil Code Enforcement Unit;
- Reestablishment of a Criminal Code Enforcement Unit in the District Attorney's Office;
- The work of the Code Enforcement Enhancement Team to develop standardized code enforcement forms, guidelines, policies and procedures for use by multiple departments; and,
- The interdepartmental code enforcement cross-training program.

Amendment to County Code

County Counsel has completed and submitted to your Board an amendment to the County Code to establish administrative fines and non-compliance fees as a means of enhancing the County's ability to achieve code enforcement compliance through civil proceedings. Your Board continued its consideration of the draft ordinance until

January 25, 2005, and instructed the Chief Administrative Officer and County Counsel to work with involved departments to develop a suggested implementation plan for use in connection with the ordinance.

County Counsel Civil Code Enforcement Unit

The Office of County Counsel has identified and is making formal assignments of attorneys and others to staff the Civil Code Enforcement Unit approved and funded in the amount of \$592,947 by your Board in the FY 2004-05 County Budget. The Unit consists of three attorneys, a paralegal and a legal support assistant. All formal assignments to the Unit will be in place by the end of January.

District Attorney Criminal Code Enforcement Section

On November 30, 2004, your Board approved an appropriation adjustment for the District Attorney (DA) to re-establish an enhanced Criminal Code Enforcement Section in the District Attorney's Office. The District Attorney's Code Enforcement Section will consist of two Deputy District Attorneys, one Supervising Investigator, three Senior Investigators and one Legal Support Assistant. District Attorney Cooley advised your Board on January 14, 2005, of his appointment of Michael Noyes as the Deputy-in-Charge of the Code Enforcement Section. He also advised that recruitment for the other positions is underway. The District Attorney also indicated that after January 31, 2005, the DA's Code Enforcement Section would begin working with the Departments of Regional Planning and Public Works to train staff in criminal investigation and prosecution of code enforcement; and will assist County Counsel in further developing the civil component of the County's enhanced code enforcement effort.

Code Enforcement Enhancement Team

In August 2004, the Chief Administrative Office and County Counsel convened a Code Enforcement Enhancement Team (CEET) composed of representatives from the following departments: DA; Sheriff; Agricultural Commissioner/Department of Weights and Measures; Treasurer and Tax Collector; Fire; and the Departments of Public Works, Regional Planning, Health Services (Environmental Health) and Animal Care and Control. The CEET has collected the existing departmental policies and procedures and has identified areas for which standardized forms, business processes and guidelines may be established. Attached is the preliminary list of the areas where standardization will be developed. We are consulting with the involved departments to prepare protocols and guidelines for administration of the civil enforcement ordinance and other code enforcement efforts and will return to your Board when they are completed.

Each Supervisor
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Interdepartmental Code Enforcement Training

In response to direction from your Board in 2003, a code enforcement-training program has been developed, piloted and evaluated to provide cross-training for the enforcement staff of the involved departments related to the identification of code violations, making factual observations, interacting with suspected offenders, and cross-referring detected violations to other responsible departments for corrective action. County Counsel and the District Attorney were both involved in the development of the training. The first annual training cycle will be initiated this year. Amendments will be made to the training curriculum to reflect the civil administrative fines and noncompliance fees, if enacted by your Board. In addition, as the CEET develops standardized forms, guidelines and procedures, these will be added to the training curriculum.

If your Board has questions, please call us, or your staff may contact Assistant Administrative Officer, Lari Sheehan, at (213) 974-1174, or Roberta Fesler, Senior Assistant County Counsel, at (213) 974-1861.

DEJ:LS:
RW:DD:pg

Attachment

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
 Planning Deputies
 District Attorney
 Treasurer-Tax Collector
 Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures
 Director, Animal Care and Control
 Fire Chief
 Planning Director
 Interim Director, Department of Public Works
 Director of Public Health, Department of Health Services

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING
ADMINISTRATIVE FINES AND NONCOMPLIANCE FEES**

1. Develop standardized form/language for the following:
 - a. Notices of violation;
 - b. Notices of administrative fines;
 - c. Notices of noncompliance fees;
 - d. Notices of lien for unpaid fines and/or fees;
 - e. Proof of service of any of the above.
2. Develop criteria and draft guidelines regarding the following:
 - a. Establishing and extending correction periods;
 - b. Imposing and setting the amount of administrative fines;
 - c. Imposing noncompliance fees;
 - d. Granting hardship waivers of the requirement for advance deposit of fines and fees;
 - e. The confirmation, cancellation or reduction of an administrative fine and/or noncompliance fee by the hearing officer.
3. Develop and draft procedures regarding the following:
 - a. Administrative hearings, including:
 - i. How a responsible person may request an administrative hearing;
 - ii. Accepting, holding and depositing or refunding administrative fines;
 - iii. The appointment of hearing officers;
 - b. Responding to judicial appeals of administrative fines;
 - c. Recordation of notices of lien and notices of satisfaction of lien.